

# Funding secured to restore the Roxy Cafe's etched windows

The Gwydir Shire Council has been successful in securing a significant grant to undertake the conservation of the etched glass that adorns the facade of The Roxy Café.

The grant has been provided by the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning of NSW. The Council will be the recipient of

\$30,000 to complete the work.

The etched glass is an important component of the story of The Roxy Café. It demonstrates how the cafe advertised in the 1930s through the colours, patterns and lettering on the glass which are excellent examples of Art Deco design.

“The restoration of The Roxy Café and the etched glass provides a unique example of the creative integration of a dynamic contemporary usage within a building of significant heritage value,” said Sandy McNaughton, Manager of The Roxy.

There are very few companies left in Australia that carry out this type of specialised restoration work. Michael Harrington is the Managing Director of Harradence Glass Decorators based in Sydney.

When contacted about The Roxy, Mr Harrington stated that in his twenty-five years experience with this type of glass work, “The Roxy Café comprises one of the most significant examples of its kind that I have seen.”

“There are very few examples of this type of etched glass left in Australia” Mr Harrington said.

“Reproduction of this work will require craftsmanship at a level that is very rare in what has become a digital age.”

“Our company has all of the required skills to restore much of the degraded glass work to its former glory. We will be utilizing all of the original techniques that were in use in 1936.”

“Work undertaken in the restoration will include incorporating the screen printing of the original graphic with line work, etching, sand blasting, mirroring and silver gilding the masking, colourbacking and acid etching required.” Mr Harrington said.

“Personally, I am excited about a project incorporating such beautiful art deco style.”

Sandy McNaughton adds that “From the moment the original



The etched glass window is a rare example and its restoration is of great importance to the Roxy Cafe

etched glass was uncovered during the restoration of the Café, it was apparent that funding should be sought to restore this unique feature.”

“Since contacting Mr Harrington, it is evident that we have underestimated the significance of the etched glass. I have been informed that it is an incredibly rare example” said Sandy.

“We are thrilled to have received this funding from the NSW Heritage Branch.”

“The Roxy serves to remind us that we are part of a cultural continuum. It is through its ability to provide an historic cultural experience in a contemporary context that

it reinforces our appreciation of, and responsibility to, preserve and protect our past, as well as to recognise the changing cultural landscape it represents.”

It is timely that the grant has been received before the planned celebrations for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Roxy to be held on the weekend of April 9 and 10.

“The official launch of the Café and the Greek Gala Ball is generating huge excitement within the Kytherian and wider Greek community. We are gearing up for a truly memorable weekend,” said Sandy.

Tickets for the Gala Ball are available at the Bingara Tourist Information Centre or telephone: 67 24 0066.



Doug Dunlop of Domenico Blu Building revealing the etched glass in May 2010

## Celebrating 65 happy years of marriage

Winifred and Mervyn Heal celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary last Wednesday.

At the age of 89 and 90 it is rare to find a couple who are still together after decades of marriage.

When asked for the secret to this successful marriage Mrs Heal said, “It is through God’s mercy and his goodness, that we are here today.”

Mr and Mrs Heal met during the war in 1942 and as Mervyn set sail as an army medical, Winifred vowed to send letters to him.

“I sent over 400 letters to him while he was overseas,” said Mrs Heal.

“At some points during the war, I didn’t know whether he was dead or alive.”

Even at his age, Mervyn is still quick off the mark in telling a story or two about his experiences at war. While he had no choice but to reply to his love’s constant letters he was also burdened with another woman’s letters.

“One fulla in the war used to get me to write his letters because he didn’t know what to say,” Mr Heal chuckled.

When asked how he courted Winifred, Mervyn said, “I didn’t have to, I was on the run from others.”

Humour obviously plays a large role in this happy marriage, so too

does the support and love they have for each other and for their family.

With 6 children, 24 grandchildren, one deceased and 26 great-grandchildren, one deceased, Mr and Mrs Heal have had more than they could ever ask for in a family.

While, they have had their ups and downs they have always struggled through life together helping their family and friends as they go.

“So many things happened during the war and ever since, but we have managed through it all,” said Mrs Heal.

Celebrating their 65 years to-

gether was their son Brian, wife Helen, and two youngest grandchildren Kristen and Mitchell, along with Helen’s daughter Cherie.

While cake, cards and presents made their day special it was the ability to celebrate this milestone with their family that made it extra special.

“Having my grandchildren here is the best present of all,” said Mrs Heal.

Sitting together on the lounge, Mervyn with his arm around his wife, Winifred with a happy smile, it is obvious to see the bond these two share. A love that will last forever.



The happy couple celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary last Wednesday



Mr and Mrs Heal were married March 16, 1946

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